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ILLEGIB

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. Harry S. Traynor
Assistant General Manager
Atomic Energy Commission

SUBJECT : Meeting Between Eric Johnston and Nikita Khrushchev on 6 October.

As I promised at the USIB Meeting on 9 December, I am transmitting herewith for your information copies of two reports resulting from Eric Johnston's six hour meeting with Nikita Khrushchev on 6 October.

One report was forwarded through the U. S. Embassy at Moscow shortly after the meeting took place. The other is contained in a Memorandum of Conversation made after Mr. Johnston talked to me on 3 December 1958 and is supplemental to the first.

Allen W. Dulles
Director

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CONFIDENTIAL

October 10, 1958

SUBJECT: Meeting Between Eric Johnston and N. Khrushchev on October 6, 1958

Before leaving Moscow, Mr. Eric Johnston left with the Embassy a copy of his account of his discussions with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, N. S. Khrushchev, on October 6, 1958. Following is the complete text as written by Mr. Johnston.

* * * * * * *

"Having been called back from Tashkent on Friday night (October 3), I met with Zhukov at 11 AM Saturday morning (October 4). He informed me that he would notify me Sunday morning (October 5) as to the details of my trip to see Khrushchev. On Sunday morning I received a telephone call from Mr. Sofinsky that I would be picked up at the hotel at 1:45 AM Monday morning (October 6). About 6 o'clock Sunday evening I was again telephoned by Mr. Sofinsky that the plans had been changed, that I was to be in my room by 12 o'clock midnight and was not to leave the room. At 12:45 Mr. Zhukov would pick me up at my apartment. He would not telephone me and I was not to meet him out front. Mr. Zhukov was there promptly at 12:45 AM (October 6). We left in a black ZIS for the Moscow airport.

Upon arrival we went to the second floor to a private room. It was about 1:45. We stayed in this room until 2:20 when Mr. Zhukov announced it was time to go. We walked out onto the field and got into a private plane No. 025. It was manned by Air Force personnel. When we got on the plane there were two other gentlemen, Mr. Yury Volsky and Mr. Troyanovsky, the interpreter. The plane was spotlessly clean, even the toilets. It was furnished in light blue and white with two large davenports and five large swivel chairs. We took off about 2:45. I did not know the destination. I was given one of the davenports and a blanket. The davenport was not long enough to lie down on, but I did manage rest of a sort.

Later in the morning (October 6) at about 10 minutes to 8, we landed at Adler on the Black Sea. We were met by a ZIS car and

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chauffeur and driven like mad around the Black Sea. It looked like the area between the French and Italian Rivieras. It was a perfect day, with a cloudless sky, and I was quite impressed with the general surroundings. About one hour later we were driven to a home, some 3 or 4 hundred feet above the Black Sea, in a place called Gagra. We went up to solid iron gates, honked the horn, and they were opened by a man. We drove through well-groomed grounds with orange and banana trees and a variety of carefully cultivated flowers.

The house was fairly large, well furnished, and well kept. A chef with a white coat and white cap and 5 girl servants were around the place. All were dressed in uniform. I was given a large double room with bath and told that I could bathe and shave and we would have breakfast. We reached the home at Gagra at about 8:55. We assembled for breakfast about 10 o'clock. After a sumptuous breakfast we took off for our final destination, Petsunda, about an hour's drive away. Again we drove like mad, mostly on two screeching wheels, through a beautiful territory. For about a mile before we reached Khrushchev's home the road was lined with tall cypress trees. At the end of this grove was a small village on the Black Sea. On the other side of this village we came to a halt before a solid iron gate with one soldier standing guard. Zhukov spoke a few words to him but presented no credentials. The gates were opened immediately and we found ourselves inside. The grounds, large and spacious, were enclosed only with a wire mesh fence not more than four feet high. I saw no other guards or security forces of any kind during my visit. The house, which looked new, is large and square. It is a two-story white stucco home situated on the edge of a large grove of what I was informed were very rare trees. I have forgotten the name. The bark on these trees had the appearance of yellow pine but the needles were more like cedar. The forest floor was clean as though it had been carefully raked. We stopped in front of the house but were not taken into it; rather we were led around the west side to the beach, which is composed of large pieces of gravel with no sand. A slated board walk, perhaps three feet wide, extended for a half mile or more down the beach. There were several cabanas scattered along the board walk. The canvas on the cabanas were colored blue or white, or both. Later Mr. Khrushchev was to inform me that one large cabana was a guest house for those who liked to sleep next to the water, while others were merely dressing rooms.

We walked down the board walk for a couple of hundred feet to a platform covered by a large umbrella under which were several chairs and a table with fresh fruit and dishes. Zhukov pointed out to me that Khrushchev was coming down the walk. Indeed he was. I quickly saw that he was hatless, and was wearing a blue suit somewhat like the seersucker type we wear in Washington in the summer. A Georgian white shirt with blue embroidery was tied by a string at the neck. Sandals were on his feet. His bald head was fringed with closely cropped white hair. He is a man of short stature with a bull neck and a large

girth

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girth. He greeted me with a merry twinkle in his eye and immediately started the conversation by saying: "Mikoyan has just told me about you. He left here yesterday for Moscow. You know, I had a hard time getting rid of him. I thought he was never going to leave."

I replied that I had met Mikoyan in 1944.

A breeze was blowing across the Black Sea and Khrushchev waved his hand and said: "This is a cold wind. It is coming from your ally Turkey. I presume we could expect nothing else but a cold wind from a NATO country." But he emphasized, "This doesn't bother us." He quickly launched into a story which he said a Yugoslavian had told him. "During the war" he went on, "people deserted the cities of Yugoslavia and lived in the hills where they engaged mainly in guerrilla warfare. The animals left the city, too. After the war was over the people returned to the city but the animals remained in the hills. A dog, a cow and a jackass got together and decided that perhaps they should go back to the city and see how life really was. They had been gone so long, however, that they thought they would send a scout down to reconnoiter. The dog was sent first. In due time he returned and said the city was terrible. He had barked and everybody had told him to keep quiet. They wouldn't even let him bark in the city any more and he didn't like it. So they sent the cow down to reconnoiter. The cow returned after while and reported that the city was terrible. Everybody had milked her dry. Finally, the jackass took his turn at viewing the city lights. When he came back he said the city was wonderful. The people had all gotten together and had elected him president. Tito heard that this story was told to me by the Yugoslavian and was furious because he felt that it was a direct insult to him. Tito is queer that way."

Suddenly, Khrushchev looked at me and said: "Why, you don't look like a capitalist at all. You are not fat. They have sent me a man in disguise--a lean man."

I replied that we had to work so hard in the capitalist countries that we couldn't get fat.

"No, no," he said and laughed heartily, his belly shaking like old St. Nick's. "Sit down," he said "and have some fruit." I am glad to welcome you to this communist land. A capitalist and a communist can at least talk together."

I then asked: "What is the cause of present world tensions, and how would you relieve them?"

"What is your next question?" he asked. I again repeated my question to him. He replied:

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"There are many causes of world tension today but perhaps the most important is imperialism in its many forms. England and France have grown rich on the exploitation of other peoples." I interrupted to say that I felt that imperialism or colonialism had cost these countries far more in the recent years than any advantages they might have received; that these countries were trying to educate people for freedom and independence.

"This is not true," he said, "look at the Middle East. Colonialism and feudalism still continue there. You are trying to keep the existing governments in power, but the people want their own governments, responsive to their own wishes. This can only come by revolution. Every woman who has a child hopes that it can be born without pain but most women have pain. The overthrow of feudalism and colonialism usually comes with pain."

"Perhaps you misunderstand our position," I said. "We do not object to nations changing their leadership even by violent method but we do object to a revolution started by an outside force, a Communist, conspiratorial force directed from the outside."

"We are not doing that," he said. "Do you think Nasser is a communist? Communism is outlawed in Egypt and I understand there are 5,000 or more communists under arrest. Do you think this is an outside communist conspiracy? Take Iraq, there the leaders are not communists. In fact, they are anti-communists. The revolt was against a feudal system. Take Finland, there is a Communist party in Finland. We wish them well, but we are not supporting them. We hope all people will overthrow feudalistic governments, wherever they are. But in your case you support these feudalistic regimes with troops. If it had not been for British troops in Jordan, Hussein would have been murdered long ago by his people, not by Communists. As soon as British troops are removed from Jordan, the people will decide what they want to do. If they want to overthrow Hussein they will do so. Why do you support these obsolete regimes in many of these Middle Eastern countries? Your imperialism takes the form of interest in oil and its revenues. Oil seems to be more important to you than people."

He had uttered these last remarks with some heat. At the first opportunity I denied vigorously many of his allegations and pointed out in some detail what the oil companies had done to raise the standard of living of peoples in these areas. I explained that several of these countries were receiving large revenues from oil, which had been developed by technical skills not possessed by these less developed areas, and that the sale of the oil produced the revenue needed by these countries. "Would you buy this oil?" I asked. His reply was quick: "Of course not! We have more oil and gas than we need. We have no interest in Middle Eastern oil. In fact, we are closing many of our coal mines because we do not need the coal. Oil and gas

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and gas are being used instead. We are dieseling our railroad locomotives, making electricity from oil and gas, using it in our factories, and we shall continue to use more oil. We are not interested in Middle Eastern oil."

I took several minutes to try to explain to him some of the problems of the oil companies, their interest in the peoples of these areas, their avoidance of political entanglements, etc., and finally said: "But many of these countries need outside help, financial assistance. The oil revenues, although large, are not of sufficient size to bring the improvements so urgently needed. Would you be willing to cooperate with financial assistance?"

To my surprise he said: "You wrote an article about this a few weeks ago in THE NEW YORK TIMES. Some of this article was accurate. The revolt in this area is against poverty and disease and feudalism. You suggested in your article that you would contribute three dollars to every dollar that we would contribute to this area."

"That's correct," I replied, "but I suggested that it should be channeled through the United Nations and be used on a regional basis. Would you agree to this?"

"We agree with the principle of helping these people," he said, "but we will not agree to spend the money through the United Nations, because the United Nations is just a puppet show with the strings being pulled by the United States. In fact, we may get out of the United Nations. Why remain in such a puppet show? No longer does the United Nations reflect the will of people."

"But," I continued, "would you be interested in joining in some fund to help raise the living standards that you have been talking about so eloquently?"

"We will contribute," he said, "but we will do so in our own way. The countries which should contribute the most, however, are those which have benefited the most from the imperialism in this area."

"Who is that?" I asked.

"England and France," he answered. "They should pay for the past exploitation of this area. Western Europe wants the oil of the Middle East. Let them pay for it at a reasonable price and let them contribute to a large fund to make up in some small measure for their long exploitation of these people. You know," he added, "it is difficult for me to understand your side. You were founded by a revolution and for years you were the great revolutionary force in the world, but today you support reactionary regimes everywhere. You don't seem to understand that the world is undergoing a change. On the contrary we support the desires of all people who set up their own governments and would be free from outside domination."

"Does

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"Does that include Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland?" I asked.

His voice reared and his fist pounded the table. "They are free," he said. "They have governments of their own choosing." Then he shifted the subject quickly, asking: "Why is Nixon so fond of Chiang Kai-shek? This is another subject of disagreement between our two countries."

I asked him if he had not confused Knowland with Nixon.

"This doesn't make any difference," he said. "Why don't you understand that the Chinese Government is the government of the people of China. We can never settle the China question until you realize this. Kerensky is now living in New York, but Kerensky has just as much chance of coming back and taking over the government of Russia as Chiang Kai-shek has of taking over the government of the mainland of China. Why can't you people understand this?"

Here I carefully explained that this was a problem I felt should be discussed by the President of the United States or the Secretary of State. This dealt with the foreign policy of the United States and I was not in a position to comment, but as a private citizen I thought that perhaps there were several reasons. One was that China was at war with the United Nations, that she had still not come to a peace treaty in Korea with the United Nations.

"You mean," he snapped, "come to a peace treaty with the United States. The United States furnished the forces and the United States did the fighting. The United Nations is just a puppet. Why do you continue to obscure the real facts. But let's not discuss these things, they are details. The broad question is, why don't you understand the situation in China? Eventually the China question must be solved."

I asked him if he would use his good offices with China to try to help solve it.

"Of course," he replied, "provided you will recognize the conditions that exist in China."

"And another cause of irritation," he said, "is you are constantly flying your planes around our border. When a neighbor pulls his blinds down you don't try to peek around the corner. We have shot down several of your planes in the East and West and we are goingto continue to shoot them down when you get around our borders. Just recently," he continued, "you had a reconnaissance plane on our border and it crashed in flames. We returned six bodies to you. Now you claim that there are eleven more men, but we don't know anything about those men. We never saw them."

I asked

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I asked him if I heard him correctly--that he had never seen these eleven men and did not now have them.

He said: "Yes, you heard me correctly. We have never seen the men, we do not now have them. We do not even know that there were eleven men aboard. If they were, we do not know what happened to them."

I said: "Have you told our Embassy?"

He replied "Yes. Now you claim that this was a plane en route from Germany but we know that isn't true. We know the base of the plane in Turkey. Your plane was on reconnaissance trying to find out about a new radar warning system that we have installed. I want to tell you that we are going to continue to shoot down any planes that violate our borders. When we have guests in our country we treat them well, but we are not going to tolerate unwelcome guests and, furthermore, I don't know what you are bothering with Turkey for. I'll let you in on a secret. We have no navy in the Black Sea and no submarines in the Black Sea and we are not going to put any there. Our missiles could wipe out Turkey in 15 minutes. We have sent a note to Turkey and we are going to make claim against Turkey for these plane incidents."

This was a subject that I was not prepared to discuss and not desiring to pursue it further, I changed the subject, saying:

"I have asked you your opinion of the cause of your irritation with the United States. Now let me give you one of the irritating problems that we have with your country." I suggested that perhaps he wasn't going to like it but I thought I should state my views frankly. He interrupted me to say: "How do you know I am not going to like it. You capitalists are always judging what communists are going to say even before they say it."

"All right," I said, "here it is. I believe that your relationships with the outside world would be greatly improved if you would allow foreign correspondents to report what they see and hear in the Soviet Union without censorship."

"There is no censorship of facts," he said, "in the Soviet Union. It is only lies that we censor. The foreign press reports what it sees. We only delete the lies. Then after we have deleted the lies, the correspondents go to the Embassy and send them through the diplomatic pouch, so they get there anyway."

"But," I interjected, "who determines what are facts and what are lies?"

"We do," he replied.

"That is

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"That is just the problem," I said. "People may have different versions of the truth. If you would allow foreign correspondents to report without censorship, you would probably get a few bad articles, but you get many good ones that would far outweigh the bad ones. Much of the suspicion which exists because of your secrecy and your censorship would be removed."

His eyes narrowed to slits, like a tomcat about to fight another. He pounded the table until the fruit shook. "Look at the lie that CBS just presented on television, the play in which I am supposed to have killed Stalin," he said. "That's the kind of lie that we don't appreciate. What would you think that kind of lie does to the relationships between our two countries during this period of the cold war? Suppose we had presented on television a play depicting President Eisenhower as murdering someone. What would you say?" I told him that I deplored untruths about anyone, particularly about rulers of states, but that untruths were sometimes stimulated by the secretiveness used in the operation of the Soviet system. For instance, the Voice of America in Russian is jammed when coming into the Soviet Union, whereas we do not attempt to jam Radio Moscow when it is broadcast in English to the states and to the world.

He said: "That is because the Voice of America tells lies."

"Mr. Chairman," I said, "the Voice of Moscow tells lies, too."

"No, it doesn't," he thundered.

"But, Mr. Chairman, I have heard the lies with my own ears on my shortwave radio in my hotel room in Moscow. Distortions of the truth, clearly. Why don't you like the Russian people to get the same kind of information that we give the American people, so the Russian people may judge for themselves. Freer flow of information both ways would do this."

During this part of the conversation he had been gesticulating vigorously and talking to me as though he was haranging a crowd. But as the sunlight sometimes breaks through the clouds on an April day, his countenance changed, he smiled, laughed, and said: "Now we are getting angry at one another. We are friends. Let us act as friends. What other question do you want to ask me?"

I started to ask him about his new educational program but he looked at his watch and remarked: "It is after 2 o'clock. Come along and have lunch with me and my family. You are going to spend the night here."

We arose and started down the walk. I had my camera with me and asked him if I might take a picture of him. He agreed readily,

and I

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and I snapped several pictures of him and of Zhukov; then Zhukov took a picture of Khrushchev and me, and the interpreter took a picture of all three of us. Khrushchev was intrigued with the camera. I told him that I was taking three-dimensional pictures in color to be viewed through a finder that restored the three dimensions. He looked at the camera with great interest during my explanation and then said: "You make better cameras than we do, but we make better missiles." And, again with a loud St. Nick's laugh, he added: "Of course the world will judge which is the most important."

We walked down the board walk to the right angle walk that led up to the house. His family awaited us. I was introduced to his wife, a stocky, peasant-type woman with a bulbous nose and gray stringy hair pulled back off her face. Wisps fell carelessly over her ears. She wore a sack-type dress of dark gray. She was very pleasant, but other than the customary salutations, said little. His daughter, whom I would judge to be about 40, was tall and rather slender, with light brown hair, a quick smile and penetrating eyes. It was obvious she had her father's energy and enthusiasm. Her husband, a man perhaps 10 or 15 years older, was tall and large of athletic build, with lots of gray hair. I later learned that he was the head of the theater in Kiev. A doctor, whom I judged to be Khrushchev's personal physician, a tall, lean man, rather handsome and fiftyish, and another man, whose name I did not learn but who appeared to be a personal secretary, completed the luncheon party. I noticed that the living room was large and spacious. The furniture was white, perhaps bleached teakwood. The chairs and draperies were also white. The room was furnished in good taste with objects of art. It was not overdone. He showed me to my bedroom, located off the living room, and it was a large, spacious room, with white furniture. A big bathroom was off this room. It was tiled and contained, in addition to the ordinary plumbing fixtures, what seemed to be a massage table. All types of toiletries were on a table and in the basin tray there was what appeared to be a large cake of perfumed French soap. The soap was purple and finely textured. After washing my hands, I joined the group in the living room and we went upstairs. On a wide balcony extending the entire length of the house, there was a dining table with the proper number of places set and a large quantity of various types of Russian hors d'oeuvres. A lace table covering looked as if it might have come from Belgium. Mrs. Khrushchev sat at the head of the table. Khrushchev was on her right and next to him sat his daughter, her husband, and the male secretary. I sat on Mrs. Khrushchev's left and next to me came Zhukov, Volsky, and the doctor.

After we sat down, Khrushchev said: "Let's have a drink of Armenian brandy first. Mikoyan won't speak to me unless I give you a drink of his brandy first." This, of course, we drank "do dna"--bottoms up.

The hors d'oeuvres

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The hors d'oeuvres were followed by soup, and trout, then by lamb chops, a salad, fruit, and coffee. We had two drinks of brandy and two drinks of vodka during the meal and there were many toasts to friendship and closer cooperation between our peoples. The lamb chops were delicious but I noticed that Khrushchev ate none. I asked him if he didn't like lamb chops. "Oh yes," he replied, "but my doctor won't let me eat them." He waved a hand at the tall man at the end of the table.

I then said: "Mr. Zhukov has told me a big lie."

"What do you mean?" asked Khrushchev.

"He told me," I replied, "that Russians had small lunches and I have never seen a bigger one." Everybody seemed to laugh at this and Khrushchev said: "You should really see a big Russian lunch if you think this is big."

My back was towards the Black Sea but I occasionally glanced around. The sea was like a mill pond, not even waves lapped on the pebbles. Through the branches of these odd surrounding trees, there was the Black Sea, and beyond loomed the tall mountains rising like blue guardians to the Caucasus.

The conversation went at a rapid fire pace. It was a jovial one. There was much kidding of me as a capitalist. I took it in good nature and, in many instances, felt that I was able effectively to turn the tables on the communists. No one spoke during the lunch except Khrushchev, his daughter, the interpreter, and me. No one interrupted him except his daughter and I noticed all were deferential including his wife.

Early in the meal I remarked that his daughter didn't look like him but like her mother. Quick as a flash, he stuck his whole arm across the table with his finger pointing towards me and roared: "Another capitalist mistake. You capitalists can never get anything right. This woman isn't her mother. This is my second wife. Ha! Ha!" he roared again. "Another capitalist lie!" His daughter came to my rescue, however, and said that she had frequently been mistaken for her stepmother's daughter. The contours of their faces were the same. "No, no," he roared, slapping the table, "I never thought my daughter would stand up for a capitalist." He then went on to explain that he had several children; one boy had been killed as a flyer during the war; another son was a graduate engineer and was now working in a technical job in Moscow; another daughter was married to an editor. "How many children are there in families in America?" he asked. "I understand an average of about four children. This is good. To increase the population--good idea."

"You

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"You wanted to ask me about our education system," he said. "My son doesn't have the same desire for education as I had." And again his eyes closed to almost catlike slits. He went on: "I worked in a coal mine owned by the French in the Donbas. I got what education I could at night. The French paid miserable wages, so I couldn't go to college at that time. This is the type of capitalist exploitation we are fighting against all over the world." His voice was raised, his fists were clenched, but the storm passed as quickly as it came. He added: "There is no use in talking about the past. The future is ours. The future of communism is inevitable. Nothing can stop it. But our youth must have the same respect for manual labor that I have. After their secondary education they will go to work. If they want to they can study at night and those who want to get an education can do so, but all must have respect for labor. It is through labor that we make human progress and the Soviet Union is going to make progress."

We had arrived at the salad course and Khrushchev wanted to know if I liked mangoes. I told him I was very fond of them. "Well," he said, "I got a shipment from Nasser the other day. I am afraid they are a little too ripe but let's try them." He rang for a servant who brought in a large tray heaped with mangoes. I took one and remarked upon its excellence. Khrushchev said: "Yes, they are good but they are not as good as the ones I get from Nehru. He sends me a shipment about once a month. By the way," he changed the subject, "how is President Eisenhower?" I told him that the President's health, in my opinion, was excellent.

"You know," said Khrushchev, "I like that man. At the Geneva Conference he took me to the bar after every meeting and we had a drink together. I hope his health is good. I'd like to sit down and have another talk with him. Why do you people have such crazy ideas about Russia and the Communist Party? It must be your capitalists who are fearful that the common people will get what they have. But President Eisenhower is a soldier, not a capitalist."

"Tell me about your seven-year plan," I said.

"There isn't much to tell. It is really an extension of old five-year plans, and a little more ambitious. We are going to increase those things that we need the most. It was hard in the early days to make much progress with industrialization but now it is increasing by geometric proportions. At the end of seven years we are going to go a long ways toward catching up with the U.S. At the end of another seven years, or at the end of 14 years, we will catch up with the U.S. in production per capita. We will have electricity for the farms of the Soviet Union, automobiles for her people. It is endless the things you can do. This is a great country, a storehouse of resources. Under communism we can do anything."

"I noticed

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"I noticed," I said, "that you are trying to populate Siberia and locating some of your new plants there. To the south of you lies a great country whose population is increasing by 15 million people a year. Ten years from now China may have another 150 million people. China could be a blessing or a problem to you. Do you consider her a problem at all? Might she be interested in the vacant lot to the north of her? Has this thought motivated your planning in Siberia?"

He looked at me rather quizzically and said: "China is a great country. By the year 2,000 it may have a billion people, but communist states never think of going to war with each other. It is only capitalist states that do that. Of course, we will have no trouble with China. All communist states believe in getting along with each other, in growing and developing. We think of peace, not of war. In my latest conference with Mao Tse-Tung he told me that China was producing more grain this year than she needed. In the Soviet Union, we can increase our agricultural production by ten-fold with adequate mineral fertilizers and adequate manpower. No, there is no fear of China. We both believe in the communist doctrine. We want to develop our countries, have a higher standard of living for our people, and you can only do that through peaceful means."

The sumptuous lunch had been completed. We walked into the upper hall where there was a large wooden box that looked like cedar painted with some design. The box was about 3½ feet by 2 feet by 2 feet. He opened the lid. Inside were neat rows of apples, wrapped in white paper. "Take one," he said, "they are the best applies I have ever eaten." I took one. It was bright red. "Who sent you these?" I asked. "An old friend of mine," he said, "Kadar in Hungary." Each of us took an apple and walked down the stairs through the living room to the front porch.

"Let's take a walk," he suggested. We walked along the boardwalk. The family remained near the porch. We were alone except for the interpreter. We walked to the end of the boardwalk, a considerable distance, and then came back. During the walk, he said: "There are two things you must understand. The Soviet Union doesn't want war and under your system the United States can't start a war. Isn't it foolish therefore to continue endlessly this cold war?"

"I quite agree with you," I said, "but it seems to me that the problem is primarily yours."

"No, that's not true," he said. "You hate communism just because it is a different system. You think you can destroy us. You think if you keep up an armaments race that we cannot do likewise and at the same time improve the standard of living of our people. You think that if our people have a lower standard of living there will be a revolt in our country. But we have proved this false. We have kept

up with

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up with you in the armaments race. In fact, in some ways I think we are ahead. At the same time we have improved our country and improved the conditions of life of our people. You are afraid of competition from us. You are afraid that we will outproduce you and outsell you in the markets of the world and that other countries will follow the communist example."

I told him that I was not afraid of this at all. As a matter of fact, I welcomed it because I was just as firmly convinced that our democratic society could produce more and bring greater happiness to its people. In such a race, free from force, there was no question in my mind which would eventually survive. There have been many changes in the world and modern capitalism in America today was no more like capitalism of the 19th century than a flower garden resembled a desert. Khrushchev came back to the subject, remarking: "Why don't you reduce armaments then, quit this foolish race and use this saving or a portion of it to help undeveloped countries improve their position?"

I retorted that President Eisenhower had said the same thing. In fact I think he proposed it.

"No," said Khrushchev, "it was a Frenchman who proposed it first and I did it second." I replied that I didn't know who proposed it first but I do know that President Eisenhower is for this kind of development program.

By this time we had rejoined the family who had gathered in a small group conversing. It was about a quarter to five.

"Now," said Khrushchev, "you will spend the night here, have dinner with us, go grouse hunting with us tomorrow. I know a wonderful spot about 30 miles from here across the sea."

"I am very sorry, Mr. Chairman," I said, "but I really think I should go back to Moscow tonight. I would like to go grouse hunting with you but I have already over-stayed my welcome as it is."

"But you haven't seen all the Caucasus," he said. "If you won't stay overnight then at least let me send you to Lake Ritzaluke. It is beautiful. You can spend the night up there."

"But, Mr. Chairman," I said, "I must be back in Moscow on Tuesday (October 7) and that would mean I wouldn't be back in Moscow until Wednesday morning. I must fly back at night."

"Why?" he asked.

"Mr. Zhukov

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"Mr. Zhukov says that I must fly back at night on Monday," I replied. "You can fly back any time you wish. You can fly back in the daytime tomorrow, if you wish."

Zhukov turned to me and said: "We can go and spend the night at Ritzaluke and leave tomorrow afternoon by plane for Moscow.

This I agreed to do.

"But you should leave immediately," said Khrushchev. "It is a long mountain road and if you leave right now you can make it there before dark. I don't want you to drive that road after night. I'll have my chauffeur put the top of the car down and I'll give you my fur-lined coat. You'll need it in the mountains."

So we left Petsunda at 8 minutes to five and were driven by the same wild driver over mountainous roads. The scenery was gorgeous. A narrow river flowed through the canyon walls. At times there were sheer walls of rock more than 1,000 feet high above us. At other times we were going along the sides of the canyon with vast space beneath us and there were no guard rails. Just about dark we arrived at the lake. The health resort had been opened in 1947. The building was of wood, painted white and green, and was of the same shoddy construction you see almost everywhere in Russia. I can only account for this by the fact that there are far too few capable artisans in many of the crafts to do all of the construction jobs being undertaken. By contrast Khrushchev's home was beautifully built.

It was the last of the season at this hotel, which was probably reserved for special dignitaries. Only one other party was present--a group of three writers and their wives. I was given a nice room, took a warm bath, had another sumptuous meal and went to bed early. All four of us went on this trip.

Next morning we arose at 6:30. After a satisfying breakfast we toured the lake in a boat. It is a small lake, perhaps three miles long and a mile and a half wide at its widest spot. Around a turn in the lake was a dacha that had been Stalin's. It was obviously being kept up. There were servants and flower beds. Towering mountains rose all around the lake. The scenery is about as beautiful as any I have seen in the world.

At 10:00 AM we left on our return trip to Adler and reached the airport about 12:30. The same plane was there to take us to Moscow where we arrived at approximately 6:15 in the evening. A chauffeured ZIS car met us on the field in Moscow.

The above

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The above is a recount of my experience. I made copious notes Monday evening in the hotel. This does not cover the entire conversation but only the highlights. It conveys the sense of the meeting. Later I shall describe my conversations with Zhukov on the plane returning to Moscow and will give some personal observations on Khrushchev, the man."

Richard H. Davis
Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.

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SECRET

9K 10-8728

4 November 1958

Meeting Between Eric JOHNSTON and N. KHRUSHCHEV
on 6 October 1958

Director of Central Intelligence
Eric Johnston
Robert Amory, Deputy Director (Intelligence)

25X1

[redacted]

Mr. JOHNSTON opened the conversation describing a visit to Mr. KHRUSHCHEV's summer home which lasted between five and six hours. In the course of this visit Mr. JOHNSTON was entertained at dinner during which time he learned the following about KHRUSHCHEV's family. JOHNSTON was advised that KHRUSHCHEV's wife, who was present at the dinner, was KHRUSHCHEV's second wife. Also present were KHRUSHCHEV's oldest daughter, who appeared to be between 40 and 43 years of age, and her husband, Victor Petrovich, Director of the Kiev Opera. In the course of this discussion it also developed that KHRUSHCHEV has a younger daughter who is married to an editor in Moscow and that he has a son about 24 years of age who is an engineer and who works in Moscow. KHRUSHCHEV mentioned that he had another son who was killed during World War II and stated that he had several grandchildren but did not specify precisely how many. JOHNSTON also noted that it appeared that KHRUSHCHEV's daughter and her husband, Victor, had been visiting at the KHRUSHCHEV home for about two weeks at the time of this particular dinner.

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JOHNSTON was informed that the Sinkiang Railroad, which has been known to have been planned for some time, is actually under construction by the Chinese and the Soviet. He was informed that they hope to have trains in operation on this railroad by the end of 1959. The Russian terminus of the railroad is at Alma-Ata in the Kirghiz Republic and the Chinese terminus will be at Lungchow in Kwangsi Province where it will tie into the railroad presently leading into Vietnam.

JOHNSTON stated that prior to his meeting with KHRUSHCHEV, he had been advised by the British Ambassador and by others in Moscow that KHRUSHCHEV had been a drunkard and that he now had very bad kidney and bladder trouble as well as prostate trouble and that he could no longer drink any alcohlic beverages and had to be very careful of his health. In addition, JOHNSTON remarked that he had been informed by the Swiss Ambassador that KHRUSHCHEV was not a good business executive, that he could not delegate authority, and that all decisions had to be made by KHRUSHCHEV personally or nothing was accomplished. JOHNSTON took issue with both of these points, based upon his observations during his visit with KHRUSHCHEV. He pointed out that during his entire five or six hour visit with KHRUSHCHEV, KHRUSHCHEV did not drink excessively but did consume two drinks of vodka, two brandies, and two or three glasses of wine. In addition, JOHNSTON observed that during the entire time of the visit, KHRUSHCHEV never excused himself to go to the bathroom. Further, JOHNSTON noted that during this five or six hour period KHRUSHCHEV was not at any time interrupted by any phone calls, messenger, or message of any description. JOHNSTON stated that KHRUSHCHEV

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remarked several times in the course of the discussions that he delegated certain functions to certain officials and that they completely managed the responsibilities he had assigned them until such time they ran into difficulties which they could not solve and then, and only then, they came to him for assistance. JOHNSTON also stated that contrary to certain information and impressions he had received prior to this meeting, he did not consider KHRUSHCHEV to be a blabber-mouth or a person who spoke without thinking and knowing what he was saying. JOHNSTON considered KHRUSHCHEV to be a master showman but nevertheless thought he was extremely careful in everything he said despite the fact that he spoke quickly and in an apparent off-hand manner. It was JOHNSTON's observation that when KHRUSHCHEV did not wish to discuss a subject or was not prepared to discuss a subject, even in a private conversation, he merely changed the subject in each case and refused to go further along lines of conversation he did not want to pursue. With respect to the state of KHRUSHCHEV's health, JOHNSTON noted that at the end of this lengthy session KHRUSHCHEV seemed just as bouncy as ever and without any signs of fatigue, whereas JOHNSTON himself felt exhausted.

JOHNSTON was impressed with KHRUSHCHEV's statistical knowledge of the United States. He stated that KHRUSHCHEV was extremely well-informed on all matters pertaining to United States production in all fields but showed a complete lack of comprehension of how the U.S. or, for that matter, the West in general operates and functions. In the latter respect, JOHNSTON felt that KHRUSHCHEV had no comprehension whatsoever.

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According to JOHNSTON, KHRUSHCHEV on two or three occasions expressed an interest in visiting the United States. In this connection he expressed a liking for and a desire to talk to President Eisenhower but commented that the President was sensitive and would not talk to people. KHRUSHCHEV went on to say that the President ought to talk to people and stated that he would like to sit down and have several long talks with the President. He expressed the view that some good might come of such talks. In this connection JOHNSTON reported that in a conversation with MIKOYAN, MIKOYAN had also said that he thought it would be helpful if the President and KHRUSHCHEV could sit down and have private conversations similar to those which MIKOYAN had with ADENAUER. In both instances, JOHNSTON pointed out to KHRUSHCHEV and to MIKOYAN that because of our system wherein reporters, photographers and the people in general know whatever the President is doing, it would be virtually impossible for the President and KHRUSHCHEV to have conversations unbeknownst to the populace of the United States. JOHNSTON stated that MIKOYAN remarked that he and ADENAUER had made some "deals under the table" which were precently in process of being worked out, but MIKOYAN declined to respond to JOHNSTON's questions as to the details of such arrangements.

Both KHRUSHCHEV and MIKOYAN described KHRUSHCHEV's visit to China in glowing terms. KHRUSHCHEV stated that in his meeting with MAO TSE-TUNG, MAO told him of the magnificant harvest China had had; they had ample grain for everyone, and were making great strides in their industrial and agricultural developments. According to KHRUSHCHEV, MAO stressed that with the new fertilizers,

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new chemicals, new seeds, and new methods of agriculture and with new scientific developments, they anticipated being able to support without any problems a billion people by the year 2000. KHRUSHCHEV informed JOHNSTON that MAO was a very forward-looking man and that he anticipated no problems between China and Russia in the future. KHRUSHCHEV, in fact, ridiculed JOHNSTON's suggestion that conceivably ten years from now KHRUSHCHEV might be looking to the United States for assistance against China and stated that this was purely a capitalist idea and that only capitalists get into wars.

In summation, JOHNSTON expressed the view that the entire motivation of KHRUSHCHEV and the Soviet hierarchy is due to a feeling of inferiority and desire to "Beat America." He cited several illustrations in support of this and stressed that KHRUSHCHEV studies the United States, particularly statistically, as a challenger studies the champion he is to oppose. JOHNSTON believes that this feeling of "Beat America" permeates all fields of Soviet endeavor including sports, cultural activities, agriculture, industrial production and scientific development, although KHRUSHCHEV appeared particularly to place emphasis on surpassing the United States economically and in production per capita prior to the end of his second Seven-Year Plan.

When asked whether or not he thought a visit by KHRUSHCHEV to the United States would be helpful to KHRUSHCHEV's understanding of the United States, JOHNSTON replied that he was doubtful that it would change any of KHRUSHCHEV's very decided mis-impressions of America unless he could remain here for a

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fairly considerable period of time. He expressed the opinion that a short visit in which KHRUSHCHEV was wined, dined, and entertained would not affect him in the slightest. He believed that KHRUSHCHEV would merely translate his various mis-impressions into antagonisms unless he could remain here for a long enough period of time to persuade himself that certain of his impressions were in fact erroneous.

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